

VZCZCXRO2398

RR RUEHAG RUEHAST RUEHDA RUEHDF RUEHFL RUEHIK RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHLN
RUEHLZ RUEHPOD RUEHROV RUEHSR RUEHVK RUEHYG
DE RUEHRA #0484 2261436
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 131436Z AUG 08 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY RIGA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5159
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 0028

UNCLAS RIGA 000484

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [AF](#) [LG](#)

SUBJECT: LATVIAN SOLDIER KILLED IN AFGHANISTAN

¶1. The Ministry of Defense announced that one Latvian soldier had been killed, and three wounded, in Afghanistan on August 11. The four servicemen's vehicle was hit by a mine or improvised explosive in the town of Meimen while escorting journalists. 13 civilians were also reported injured in the blast.

¶2. The battlefield casualty is Latvia's first related to coalition efforts in Afghanistan, and the first combat death for Latvian forces since December 2006, when two soldiers were killed in Iraq. Both President Zatlers and PM Godmanis expressed their condolences to the family of the fallen soldier.

¶3. Ambassador Larson called Speaker of the Saeima (Parliament) Daudze, in his role as Acting President, to offer condolences. Daudze said that while the loss is tragic, the GOL realizes that their armed forces are in a combat zone and the government remains committed to the mission in Afghanistan.

LARSON